

***Picture Yourself in Four Years: The College Experience***

**An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is a culmination of diptych writings that pair and respond to photos that showcase our experiences over the last four years at Ball State. The photos were chosen by each of us separately to showcase significant moments and some of the events overlap between our stories. Since our journeys were so similar, the progression of writing flows chronologically and is relatable to many students that go through similar experiences. The journey of creating this project was a personal experience for each of us while still possessing an outward value to the public and other students. We were able to dig deep into our memories and digest the experiences we had for others to learn from, relate to, and even just enjoy. Throughout this semester, we've pushed ourselves past our given talents and majors to produce something that made us think outside of the box and try something new. We hope that current and future members of the Ball State community enjoy a glimpse into our lives over the last four years.

## **Acknowledgments**

Thank you to Dr. Berg for advising Maggie and I on our journey to complete this thesis. I also want to thank Maggie for taking on this crazy idea with me. I'm so grateful to have conquered college with you.

## Process Analysis Statement

Hanna Kadinger

This thesis project began long before the semester it was created. Maggie Flowers and I met at freshman orientation in the summer of 2016. We chatted from across the table in the Ball Honor's House about a shared need to retake the math placement exam. From there, a friendship blossomed and we became each other's first real friends in college. We decided to take on much of the "firsts" together such as dorm hall bonding events, welcome week convocations, sorority recruitment, and more. As our college journey continued, we had classes together, went on trips together, and even joined the same sorority. We grew as students and women throughout our four years at Ball State and in the Honor's College and decided that it was only fitting that we pursue our last venture, the thesis, together.

This thesis is a culmination of diptych writings that pair and respond to photos that showcase our experiences over the last four years. The photos were chosen by each of us separately but some of the events overlap between our stories. Since our journeys were so similar, the progression of writing flows and is relatable to many students who go through similar experiences. The poems and writings follow an alternating pattern between authors with some photos having both of our work included. We decided to leave our names off of our individual writings because we believe the content and message within the words is more important than who wrote it. The best part about this project is that it was a personal experience for each of us while still possessing an outward value to the public and other students. We were able to dig deep into our memories and digest the experiences we had for others to learn from, relate to, and even just enjoy. Throughout this semester we've pushed ourselves past our given talents and majors to produce something that made us think outside of the box and try something new. Neither of us claim to be professional poets or creative writers but somehow we were able to produce work we are very proud of and want to share with others. The process took us down roads and memories we had forgotten about and I am thankful we were able to share this time together, one last time, before graduation.

One of the struggles I had throughout this process was deciding what level of my personal life I wanted to share with the world. I knew that I was giving up some kind of control when I dove into this

project but the level of comfort I had with that had not grown. I believe I struggled most with the uncertainty of the project. At any given point, I wasn't sure where the next picture would take me or who in the world would be reading it at any given time. In the best way possible and with intention, we had an overarching plan but no clear path or checkpoints to get there. The photos were the driving force and led us to discover memories, emotions, and lessons we didn't have at the forefront of our minds. Although I understood the importance of finding the hardships of my journey, I struggled to dig deep into the difficulties of college; nonetheless I was determined to not only portray the highlights and times filled with joy. I am the type of person who does not enjoy sharing her struggles or hardships with others out of fear of coming off as needy. My college experience was full of hardships but I had to force myself to share some intimate parts of my life to really show my full story. College is hard and comes with difficulties many could not imagine without being in our shoes and I feel by the end of the project I was able to include some of the trials during my time at Ball State and in college.

Another step in the process that I found difficult was choosing which photos to include and which photos to omit from the project. As a woman growing up in a technology filled world, I choose to capture photos of both the important and the mundane times in my life that I want to cherish. I found that throughout my four years, I had thousands of photos that were options to choose to include in this project but only a few of them made the cut. The process to decide which ones to include was actually led by the photos themselves. I found that when I sat down with the photos and sought out the next one to write with, certain memories, stories, and images stood out more than others. Something I notice now, after completing the project, is that most of my images rely on a personal relationship or person to complete it. I think this speaks to the power of relationships and people in college. I truly could not have survived or thrived through the last four years without the guidance, support, and leadership I received from the people these photos represent. While not every person is showcased in the photos, the pictures themselves brought out the essence of the work they did for me.

While I struggled to choose which photos to include in the project, I faced a dilemma of "would people actually want to read about this?" I felt the urge to include every little thing that happened during



the four years of college because each of them seemed important and formative to my experience. I really had to sit down and analyze the photos to discover which of them represented or moved me to discover pivotal points in college. I found that some of the photos I was planning to include had a selfish motivation for including such as bragging or boasting about my accomplishments. While there is a time and place for celebration of those wonderful things, I found that this thesis was not it. I am proud of my decisions to omit certain photos that I felt took away from the purpose of the project and ultimately led to a better overall result.

In a way, I felt like this was a both a research and creative thesis. While not your conventional research method, we were doing research into the college experience, ourselves, photos, and creative writing and poetry. Since neither of us have a background in creative writing, we had to first research the different forms we could use within our project. Poetry was something that sparked my interest and I wanted to play with a few forms, especially Allen Ginsberg's American Sentence form. I usually struggle with brevity and conciseness in writing so the American Sentence form forced me to really find the root of my writing. We also played with different rhyming patterns, haikus, and even acrostic poems. While we had to research to get us started, each photo spoke to us, moved us, and led us to the writing we produced. I think in some of my poems, I took a more personal approach and told my own story. I let the reader decipher their own message or take-away from the writing instead of laying it out there. In other photos and writings, I spent time with the image and let it work on me in a way that lead me to the message I wanted to portray in an upfront way. I feel as though throughout my four years I have failed, succeeded, and everything in-between and I wanted to share my experiences in a way that others could learn from. This was the benefit to others that we wanted to explore in this project. We wanted this to be a formative experience for each of us personally but also be a way that others can learn what college will look like and prepare them for similar experiences and emotions. I think this could be a project used in future HONR 100 courses or even in prospective student tours or orientation. This is not only an example of what a student thesis can look like, it serves as a resource and guide for student life at Ball State from 2016-2020. While our thesis is something required for our honor's diploma, I feel as though it served a

much larger purpose for me. I was able to reflect on the last four years of my life that have been filled with the highest of highs and lowest of lows. I look forward to the next chapter of my life and I am thankful I was able to begin and end this one with my dear friend Maggie.

## Day One

I can write my own story now, but what do I want it to say?  
I don't have to be who I was yesterday.  
I had nothing and everything to prove.  
And I needed my transition to be smooth.  
I was trying to impress while keeping my anxieties at bay.

My first day here with all my new peers  
Hoping I say the things they want to hear  
The talkative girl said "you and I are friends now"  
Thank god she did because I did know how.  
After meeting Hanna, one thing became clear.

I was searching for happiness and friendship and health,  
I'd soon find that the way to get there was to be myself.



## The Beginning

We've become comfortable here  
Creating a home away from home  
This journey began with a chance meeting of two vulnerable young woman  
Yearning to fit into a sea full of new faces  
We became a source of comfort for each other  
Not knowing what this relationship would turn into  
Now we're prepared to share this journey with you  
Through the highs and lows, we've learned and grown how to conquer this thing called college  
So hopefully this helps you  
In some way  
And if it doesn't  
It helped us  
Reflect and rediscover why we chose to do this in the first place

## Long Distance

You were the hardest to leave  
when I chose a school over 500 miles away.  
I couldn't stand to be one foot apart from you  
on a normal day.

I saved these memories of our first vacation together  
Playing mini golf on a course I'd seen a hundred times  
Was different when I walked it with your hand in mine.

My hat looked better backwards on you than it did on me  
I pictured you wearing it every day when I was at school too  
far away.





### **Alone at Last**

This is what it looked like when I was scared out of my mind.

Alone for once and my mind filled with what ifs.

What if I can't find my class?

What if I chose the wrong major?

What if I don't fit in?

What if I overdress?

What if I underdress?

What if they know I'm a freshman?

What if I can't do it?





### The Lanyard

But I did it. Maybe slightly overdressed and over prepared. Only kidding of course.

I wandered into HONR 203 with Dr. Berg, only to find there were no other freshman in sight after our short and timid introductions.

My cover was blown. My fear from the night before had become reality.

They know. I mean come one, who wears a dress on the first day?

I nestled into my chair and sparked up chit chat with the classmate to my right.

They asked if this was my first day... it was.

I sunk into my chair and tried to act like it was no biggie.

"It's the dress right?"

No, it was the lanyard. The one I was sure every college student had.

I tucked it into my backpack and went on with my day, gaining confidence with every class.

If I learned one thing from the first day, it's that no one's first day is easy. Everyone has some kind of nerves and jitters. So try to ease your mind and realize that you WILL get through this. I did... somehow.

## The New Guy

“Sweet just got sweeter” read our seafoam comfort colors tank tops that would become my new favorite shirt. The hectic, exhausting, and emotionally draining week had brought us to this point. The energy of the group was overwhelming. I don’t know what I would do if Hanna wasn’t there too. The women I had met that brought me there were kind and inviting, but they already knew each other. We were outsiders. I was new and uncomfortable, but also hopeful that the next four years would give me everything they had promised. Little did I know, this awkward and nerve-racking gathering was the first step to finding myself.





## Family

It all seems pretty cheesy, don't ya think?  
The matching shirts  
The perfectly stacked photos  
The deception leading up to the big reveal  
But they are my family away from home  
The ones to lift you up through the valleys of these four years  
The ones you call when you are craving McDonald's at 12AM  
The ones that support you through the decision to change your major twice  
The ones that keep you here because this thing called college isn't easy  
I swore I'd never be "that girl" - but here I am, and I am so thankful that I along with so many others decided to be "that girl"



## My Mentor

This formal pairing  
With my guide, my counselor,  
My forever friend.

From the beginning  
Katie was there to lean on  
With arms wide open.

Together we were  
As she pushed me to become  
The woman I am.





### **The Changing of the Seasons**

If there's one thing I've learned in college, it's that friendships are not forever.

They change with the seasons and leave you wondering why you ever liked summer in the first place.

You have this idea that you have to appease each disagreement and make it through each fight but some things just aren't worth saving.

Each person in your life came in a different season and may leave in a different season as well.

They served a purpose and while no one is advocating for broken friendships, it's okay if the relationships you build don't grow and move with you.

I encourage you to allow people to help you realize what you want in life and journey through college together, but if there comes a time that they start to feel like a force pulling you back, it may be time to go your separate ways.

Take the time to grieve and reflect on that relationship.

You want to be able to look back on those fond memories without the sour taste of summer.

Before you know it, the leaves will change and you'll be staring in the face of fall.

### **Social Distancing (before it was cool)**

Dorm room snapchat selfies  
My phone camera begged me to get out of my room  
Dishes piled up on top of my dresser  
And I waited for my Facetime with Ally to resume

You were my everything freshman year.  
I wanted to be there or you to be here.

We were trying to beat the distance.  
You were struggling with all of the things that you were going through  
And I wanted to be of assistance.

I only left for classes and meals  
So no need to do my hair  
People asked me to go and hang out with them  
And I just didn't care

I know I missed out  
By staying in my room  
But you were the only thing I could think about.







### Focus

There's always time for the one's that mean the most  
"Just one more" they'd say, snuggling closer into the story  
Wanting to sleep myself, I'd rush through another on my way  
to bedtime,  
Not thinking about this moment being captured forever  
We're trained to think about the next obligation without  
finishing the last and multitask so no one thing gets our full  
attention.  
But that's not fair to now  
Or later

## Love Yourself

This is the thinnest I have ever been  
I felt confident in every bathing suit I was in.

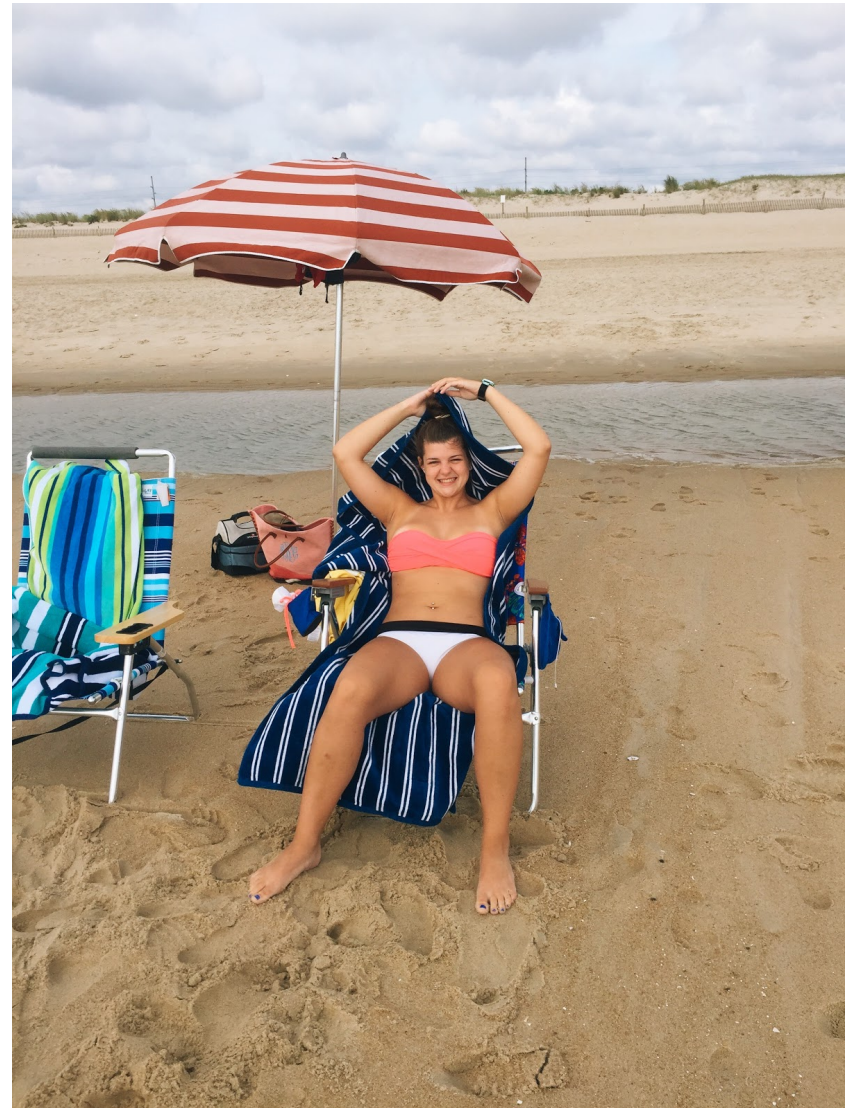
I struggled with my weight my whole life  
And this summer it was something I wanted fight

My gym alarm went off at 4 in the morning  
I left the house to others snoring

My meals were planned, calculated and scheduled  
And I only ate what and when I was allowed.

I looked amazing  
My body felt great  
And I got used to missing the food I didn't let myself eat.

But that didn't last  
So here I am again  
Looking to the past  
Wishing I hadn't let it fall away.





### **The View**

It's so easy to be too cool for it.  
It's easy to say, no way, that's not for me.  
Or that's weird, I could never do that, I'm not talented enough.  
I've heard I'm not smart enough, not good enough, and just flat out I don't want to.

But let me tell you, you are never too old to learn something new.

My 6 year old nephew has taught me more in his short life than I ever knew was possible.

His face lights up in ways ours don't anymore.

He has a pure excitement for life and the confidence to tackle anything.

Not even an ocean filled with the vast unknown can scare him.

I challenge you to chase after every wave that comes your way because you don't want to be the one that gets stuck in the sand.



## The Girl Who Lived Down The Hall

September of sophomore year and I finally felt like I fit in here. We moved into campus early and Madison lived 4 doors down from me.

I got to hang out with the friends she had already made, people I didn't reach out to because I was afraid. We would sit on the floors in the dorms laughing until my belly felt warm.

Since this photo was taken, we've worn matching outfits time and time again. This was my first college group of friends.

Now these are the friends who share my home. Since our first semester of friendship, closer and closer we have grown.

They never allow for a moment that is dull  
And it all started with the girl who lived down the hall.



### Recruitment Season

Bags under my eyes from a lack of sleep  
Seemingly endless hours of making memories to forever keep  
I was ready for the event ahead but I was exhausted.

The excitement would carry me through  
And when it was over  
We thought of all the work for next year that we would get to do.



### Peace, Love, and AOII

By now we'd grown more confidence in ourselves and the women we were a year ago were nowhere to be found. We finally felt like we had two feet on the ground and found our sense of belonging on Ball State's campus. Everyone comes in wanting to identify with someone or something and for some, they never find that group. Whether it's an identity you build yourself or one you're born into, this campus will help you find where you belong. It can be a lonely four years without your people and while your journey doesn't have to look like ours, I hope you find your sense of belonging and your tribe. There's a campus full of people out there so open yourself up to the idea that there are people out there waiting to belong too.





### **What will you do with some sunshine and time?**

One of the best parts of college is the long summer breaks. We dream of sitting poolside and taking long naps for 4 months before returning in the Fall.

But that's not exactly how it happened for me.

My summers were filled with internships, working, and volunteering my time - which sometimes included washing hogs.

Instead of sleeping my summer away, I chose to make the most of my time and do things that would advance my future career, help my community, and invest in my future.

One of the best parts of college is the long summer breaks; That gives you the opportunity to learn beyond a classroom. No exams, no readings, just the real world and the time to use it.

While you deserve a break from the stress of your studies, use your time wisely because there is so much to learn in four months that no lecture will provide to you when you return in the Fall.

**48 Hour Rule**

Confrontation.  
Intimidation. Confusion. Self-doubt.

Confrontation  
Conversation. Understanding. Compromise.

Confrontation.  
Growth.







### A legacy

There are few words that can be said, spoken, or typed to truly describe how it would have been to survive college without them. I quite frankly couldn't have done it. They are there when others aren't because regardless of bias, they're there by blood. Unlike many, I made the choice to travel 10 minutes down the road for college and live out a third generation legacy of becoming a Cardinal. For four years of high school, I dreamed about getting away, having my autonomy, and finally getting my independence. I was sure I would regret the decision to stay at home and earn that degree while my friends had their independence and freedom.

Boy was I wrong.

Life threw some curveballs through these last four years, as will it for you. Maybe you'll create your own family here at Ball State and maybe you'll be like me and rely on your kinfolk more than ever. While you gain your freedom and you feel like you're finally alone for one, you can't do it alone, so don't try. I know what the taste of independence feels like - it's deceiving.

## The Breakup

The icy morning was a relief to wake up to.  
The tear-filled phone call that lasted until three in the morning  
didn't let me get any sleep.  
Luckily I had sisters giving me things to do.  
Our snowy photoshoot was a good distraction but I couldn't  
help thinking about that conversation.

Like that Saturday morning, my words to her were cold.  
She thought we were forever and I wasn't sold.

Her loathing started then, and that's the hardest part.  
Every now and then I feel her still in my heart.





## Hillary

There will a person that changes you, molds you, stops you in your tracks and shakes you.

The one that ignites something inside of you that you didn't know was there.

The one that fills the void others have left.

The unexpected, unplanned, and unwanted friendship that the universe forces on you for some unknown reason.

The one that leaves you wondering what His plan is and why you've been placed in the same spot at the same time.

The ones that bring you the calm in the storm and shelter you through its wrath.

The one that brings spontaneity to your type-A personality and thrusts you past your comfort zone.

My one is Hillary. May you find your Hillary.



## Thanks for the Sleepovers

Park Hall room 372  
Was my favorite space for me and you.  
Late night talks,  
And get-to-class-on-time walks,  
Relationship doubts  
And switching majors in and out.  
A lot changed during sophomore year  
And you helped keep my head clear.

Though our t-shirts had different names,  
You were like my sister and it didn't matter that our sorority  
wasn't the same.

We're not as close as we were then.  
Honestly, I'm not sure it will be like that again.  
For you, my heart is still filled with appreciation  
And I'll always look to you for advice and inspiration.





### Invisible

You smile through the anxiety attack because you have to be strong.

You take a few deep breaths because you have to make it to your next class because there's an exam worth 40% of your grade.

You lash out at the people who love you most because you're afraid to tell them what's really going on.

You spend days alone with no human contact because you just can't bear to utter the words "I need you."

You finally work up the courage to tell your doctor at your annual physical that you'd like to look into medication, because surely that'll do the trick.

You push away all of the people closest to you and turn down opportunities because you're not good enough.

You take 20 minutes to find an outfit only to cancel plans because you look too fat and ugly in all of the clothes you own. You'll get through it, but it'll always be a part of who you are.

### Carroll County, MD

Moments like these don't happen every day  
Maybe just twice a year since I've been away.  
Four years ago I couldn't wait to get some space  
But it's hard to keep up when you're not in the same place.  
Things aren't the same at home anymore.  
These steps and this patio belong to someone else.  
Brady is no longer staring at my fist full of treats.  
Jack's living on his own and Chrisitan somehow thinks he's grown.  
Though not everything looks the same  
Distance is a battle we have overcome.







### **Tongues out**

A selfie won't hurt a thing, even if you're covered in rain and sweat.

## Freedom Finally

Summer time in Muncie  
And my first time really on my own.  
I'd been waiting and waiting for this but when it came I was so  
far out of my comfort zone,  
I didn't think it would be a big deal remembering to feed myself  
at every meal

My first taste of adulthood and I wasn't at all scared but  
truthfully, I was very unprepared.

It forced me to grow up  
and it let me have fun,  
I was free to do what I pleased  
And sing in the shower to no one.

I'm still learning how to manage my day-to-day  
I haven't mastered it yet, but I'm on my way.





### **Life of an Intern**

A summer alone, with no one but me.  
Only so much time but so much to see.  
My days spent in the Capital, buzzing around.  
Tour after tour, I was finally home bound.

From parades to baseball, we saw it all  
Monuments and museums along the National Mall.  
So many mirror selfies, "look mom it's me!"  
Ready to work hard and eager to please.

I may not end up in DC, and that's okay  
I think for now, Muncie is my place to stay.  
Take your time, experience those places,  
Because one day you'll wake up in a sea of new faces.



### **Where's My Clipboard?!**

I've always liked to take the lead and liked to be in charge  
I was excited that my responsibilities this week were large.

It was my job to keep our numbers afloat  
While making sure all of our members all had a vote.

No time for many pictures and lacking sleep - I was running all around  
Collecting papers while others were preparing the background.

I'm thankful that I had Mac on my team  
And all my other friends on whose support I would lean.

We scurried, we rushed, we crammed and we stressed  
And our recruitment was successful - I would say one of the best.





### **College Sweetheart**

The one I'll take with me after college; the first glimpse of our journey.

### **I volunteer**

Bold  
And unafraid.  
Not hesitant to accept a new challenge and  
Not threatened by a lack of experience.

Little did I know at the time, I would walk through the year with  
their hands in mine as we guided each other through the highs  
and lows of learning something entirely new.

Growth happens outside of the comfort zone.







### **1, 2, 3, Jump!**

Don't take yourself or others too seriously, there's no time for that.

## They were Roommates

Living with six women means constant entertainment  
Living with these women means continuous encouragement

It's hard to find a group of people that see it all.  
Many will be with you when you fly, but few when you fall.  
Every early morning and every late night,  
I am always surrounded by their light.

Their goals grow in different directions than mine.  
Our net is wide spread.  
Each individually and collectively working towards the bright  
future ahead.

It wasn't all great.  
We lacked privacy and rarely experienced quiet.  
But despite my repeated wishes that my roommates would do  
their dishes,  
I wouldn't trade, swap, or drop one thing.

Friendships developed and deepened with each personal  
celebration and every long day  
And I'm grateful to have something that makes it hard to move  
away.







### **1100 W. Carson**

There will come a time when you say goodbye to the dorm.  
You move into a house with some friends, it's the norm.  
They may not be your besties, but that may change.  
Living on your own can feel a little bit strange.

Bonfire after bonfire we bonded and got close  
But when no one cleans the bathroom it can get pretty gross.  
We'd throw a party or two and decorate for Christmas  
I'm sure the neighbor boys really miss us.

I wish I would have swallowed my pride and communicated  
more  
With these wonderful women instead of closing my door.  
Living with people is hard and that's something I learned  
But these lessons take time and must be earned.

### Foster Mom

Sit, fetch, down, stay.  
All he wanted to do was play.  
But I didn't mind, I liked to play too  
I'd been waiting to foster someone just like you.  
My roommates had left, and I hated living alone  
But lucky for me, you needed a home.  
I'd rush home from work to let you outside.  
We would walk through campus and go to the park for hours at  
a time.  
You didn't always listen and sometimes caused some trouble  
But I loved you through it all and the experience made me  
humble.  
But before too long, I got a call,  
A friend of a friend saw your picture on my Facebook wall.  
She was looking for a pup and thought you were sweet,  
And couldn't wait until you could meet.  
You got along right away and the paperwork was filed the next  
day.  
I see her pictures all the time and I remember when you were  
mine.





### **Radiant**

Bringing sunshine to every dark place is a specialty of hers.



**Megan**

Looking back now I can see where I went wrong  
It was the timing that was right when she came along.  
Regardless of the red flags I dragged myself into the hole of  
infatuation.  
Being alone was scarier than being in the wrong relationship.





## Family

I am a third generation Cardinal who had little choice on where I was destined to go to college. This university has become a home to me throughout my four years and has given so much to my family. When I arrived on this campus, I was determined to make my experience count and figure out where my place was in such a large group of people. The Homecoming Steering Committee gave me that place. I was able to serve alongside the Alumni Association and plan Homecoming for current students, faculty, and alumni. This process gave me a new perspective on what it means to be a Cardinal. I am determined to inspire others to not think of themselves as an individual human on this campus, but as one member of the large Ball State family. Ball State is our home and can provide opportunities that are unimaginable if you can come in with an open heart and mind. I can't wait to graduate and serve as an engaged alumni who is able to give back so other students can have similar amazing experiences like I did.

### Family Over Everything

You wouldn't have seen these smiles a year ago  
We were on rocky terms when I left for school.  
I thought I was over-criticized, I was told I was being dramatic.  
I thought I was brave, I was told I was a disgrace.  
Family is supposed to love and support you,  
So were the things they were saying true?  
I believed I was embarrassing and intolerable.  
It took separation and time for me to feel confident enough to  
speak up.  
Once I did I felt heard and finally relieved,  
We were able to repair our relationship and it left me feeling  
loved and accepted.  
I wish I hadn't waited so long to take the first step.







### **My Women**

There are few people in life that will be there through it all. They don't care whether you have the latest iPhone, or the lululemon leggings.

They care that you're okay, and you're well, they care about your successes and failures and your resilience through it all. They'll answer every call, and solve all problems.

They want to see you try, and try your best, even if that doesn't mean the best outcome.

For me, these people are my mother and grandmother, but for you this may look different.

I truly could not have gotten through these four years without them and I wouldn't want to think about what it would have been like if I had to.

While I've met so many people at Ball State that will support me, nurture me, and care for me, nothing will ever compare to the love of these women.

I worked hard for this diploma, but I owe all I am and all I ever will be to them.

### **Welcome to the Real World**

Welcome to the real world.  
Have your hair perfectly curled.  
Your handshake must be firm,  
And you must work on their terms.  
Act like a lady,  
And mind your manners.  
Don't speak out of turn,  
And laugh at their banter.  
Do you work,  
Don't make a mistake.  
Stare at a computer until you get a headache.  
Starting at the bottom  
But that's not where I'll stay.  
Would you like a copy of my resume?



## Homecoming

**A** night that I'd waited for since I'd watched AOII seniors on stage three years ago

I worked with Madison for hours to put the perfect choreography together

Rehearsals were every night and we wanted to win

Just thinking about my chapter screaming for us was enough motivation

After all the practice and preparation, I put on my matching Beatles shirt and I was ready.

Minutes on the stage felt like seconds.







### **Timeout**

**Cheering** for our Cards in the same way we've done since I was little.

**Hoping** the concession stand made a good batch of popcorn. I wouldn't trade these moments for the world.

**Rushing** from class or a meeting to make a 7pm tipoff.

**Praying** for a victory.

**Calendar** full of games, we haven't missed one in years.

**Home court**, Worthen Arena, was our favorite place to be.

**In our same seats**, Section O, Row H, Seats 6 and 7.

**Rivalry** after rivalry, we loved each game.

**Proud** to make time in a hectic schedule to spend time with Dad.

## Family Tree

A stereotypical Greek Family picture with us all stacked on top of each other. Three years ago when I had my big/little reveal, it was only me and Katie. It was always a goal of mine to be at the top of a full Greek family picture. Watching each of these women step up to take a little which completed our family tree makes me nostalgic and proud. While relationships are made and broken, my Greek family is full and standing strong amongst all the rest that is going on in the world. And that is important to me.





### Thinking upside-down

The biggest thing college will teach you is to be open to different perspectives. The world is much bigger than a small town in Indiana. I've met types of people I didn't even know existed and through them I've learned more about myself. We introduce ourselves by our pronouns out of respect for others differences. We create spaces for each human to exist because where they came from before may not have been so welcoming. We respect individuals not because we believe the same, but because we expect the same extended to us. I hope the Ball State that exists in 10 years continues to be filled with good people as it is today. Be good people.



### **Class of 2020**

Our celebration  
And all of our recognition  
Was taken away

We're trying to stay sane  
As we keep up with our lives  
In the wake of disruption, cancellation, and uncertainty.

All preparation is now irrelevant  
Lives and plans are on hold -  
I've always struggled to be patient but we'll all keep hanging  
on.



## The End



I've imagined ringing the thesis bell for years now. Upon the completion of our thesis, we would ring the bell together and take our photo to commemorate the end of the best four years.

Instead, the doors are locked, the lights are off, and there is not a professor in sight. The weather is changing and the sun is out but the students are nowhere to be found. It seems as though summer break came early, but this is no break at all.

Everything we've been looking forward to has been stolen. No ringing of the thesis bell, no honors recognition ceremony, no formal commencement, no AOII senior week or alumna ceremony, and no celebration with family and friends. This is such a big milestone in life that will pass by with only memories and no formal transition as life usually gives.

In an attempt to make it feel as normal as possible, I decorated my cap and threw on my gown and regalia to snap a photo by the house I feel raised me during these four years. I've grown up here, challenged myself here, been encouraged here, and left here as a confident woman ready to take on the world. Whether you're ready or not, this university will change you, challenge you, confront you, and create you. It doesn't take a formal ceremony to commence the beginning of your new adventure, but for me, it took a photo.

\*The images in this thesis were used with permission by their subjects.